IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as shown below, wherein ~~strikethrough~~ indicates material to be deleted and underlining indicates material to be added. The listing of claims below will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of claims:

1-27. (Cancelled)

28. (Currently amended) A method for producing plants or parts thereof having increased tolerance against drought, fungal infections, increased salt concentrations or extreme temperature, and showing essentially normal growth, comprising:

(a) transforming a plant, a plant tissue, or a plant cell with a nucleic acid which encodes a virus-encoded transport protein;

(b) regenerating at least one transgenic plant from the transformed plant, plant tissue, or plant cell;

(c) testing each transgenic plant from step (b) to identify transgenic plants having increased tolerance against drought, fungal infections, increased salt concentrations or extreme temperature in comparison with wild-type plants or transgenic plants not transformed with the nucleic acid which encodes a virus-encoded transport protein, and showing essentially normal growth; and

(d) using each transgenic plant identified in step (c) to produce at least one transgenic plant line, plant, plant part, or plant cell having increased tolerance against drought, fungal infections, increased salt concentrations or extreme temperature and showing essentially normal growth,

wherein the virus-encoded transport protein is not tobacco mosaic virus (TMV) movement protein or a derivative thereof.

29. (Previously added) The method of Claim 28, wherein the virus-encoded transport protein is the potato leaf roll virus (PLRV) transport protein pr17 or a derivative thereof.

30. (Previously added) The method of Claim 29, wherein the derivative is a PLRV pr17 protein with a hydrophilic N-terminal extension.

31. (Previously added) The method of Claim 30, wherein the hydrophilic N-terminal extension is the amino acid sequence MAELGSGSELHRGGGRSRTS (SEQ ID NO: 1).

32. (Previously added) The method of Claim 28 wherein the increased tolerance against fungal infections is an increased tolerance against infections with *Phytophthora infestans*.

33. (Previously added) The method of Claim 28, wherein the plants are dicotyledonous plants or monocotyledonous plants and wherein the plant tissues or plant cells are derived from dicotyledonous plants or monocotyledonous plants.

34. (Previously added) The method of Claim 28, wherein the plants are dicotyledonous plants and wherein the plant tissues or plant cells are derived from dicotyledonous plants.

35. (Previously added) The method of Claim 33, wherein the plants are tobacco plants.

36. (Previously added) The method of Claim 28, wherein the plants are monocotyledonous plants and wherein the plant tissues or plant cells are derived from monocotyledonous plants.

37. (Previously added) The method of Claim 35, wherein the plants are cereal plants.